

Message Text

SECRET

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73

ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00 L-01

PM-03 MC-01 DODE-00 PRS-01 SP-02 (ISO) W

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R 241144Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 1039

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

S E C R E T BANGKOK 3133

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, TH, CB, LA, MASS

SUBJ: SMUGGLING OF M-16S

1. COLONEL KRIT SANGKHASAP, PHETBURI PROVINCIAL POLICE CHIEF, IS ONE OF THE LEGENDARY CRIME AND COMMUNIST FIGHTERS IN THAILAND. WHEN THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR STOPPED TO SEE HIM FEB 21, ONE OF KRIT'S MEN HAD JUST RECEIVED A 1,000 BAHT (\$50) REWARD. FIVE HUNDRED BAHT OF IT WAS FOR KILLING A BANDIT, AND THE OTHER 500 FOR CAPTURING THE M-16 HE WAS CARRYING.

2. KRIT HAS PICKED UP SOME 2000 VARIED HANDGUNS SINCE HIS ARRIVAL 11 MONTHS AGO IN PHETBURI, GENERALLY CONCEDED AS THE MOST LAWLESS OF THAILAND'S 71 PROVINCES. SERIAL NUMBERS FOR THE FOUR M-16S THAT HE HAS RECENTLY CAPTURED, AND WHICH WERE ON DISPLAY IN HIS OFFICE, ARE AS FOLLOWS: 859516, 3188547, 3185839, AND 846731.

3. KRIT CONTENDS THAT THESE M-16S CAME FROM EITHER LAOS OR CAMBODIA. HE CLAIMS THERE IS A NEW SMUGGLING ROUTE FROM SOUTHERN CAMBODIA BY SEA TO PHAI ISLAND OFF PATTHAYA, AND THEN DIRECTLY ACROSS THE GULF OF THAILAND TO PHETBURI. THE WEAPONS ARE IN HIGH DEMAND BECAUSE PHETBURI HAS OVER 200

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GUNMEN AVAILABLE FOR HIRE. THAI COME FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY

TO SEEK OUT THESE GUNMEN WHO, FOR A MODEST FEE, WILL RUB OUT
WHOMEVER THE EMPLOYER DESIGNATES.

4. WE RECOGNIZE THAT EMBASSY PHNOM PENH IS FULLY PREOCCUPIED
WITH THE WAR, AND THERE ARE MANY OTHER THINGS TO DO THAN CHECK
M-16 SERIAL NUMBERS. ON THE OTHER HAND, CRITICS IN THE U.S.
OF OUR EFFORTS IN INDOCHINA WOULD DELIGHT IN THE NEWS THAT THIS
PORTION OF OUR MILITARY AID MAY BE SEEPING OUT OF COUNTRY FOR
A PRICE. WOULD MUCH APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION WHICH MAY BE
AVAILABLE ON THESE WEAPONS.
KINTNER

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